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**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

No one is paying attention to the costs and benefits to the home consumer. The home consumer WINS if Microsoft is left as is. Yes, the average consumer does not want to make choices around which operating system to purchase, then having to figure out which software applications are compatible. The average consumer also does not want to worry about interfaces between those pieces and parts that are not compatible, because when something goes wrong, there will be no one to take ownership of the problem. Additionally, once the consumer has purchased all of the pieces and parts, chances are that he/she will need to install all of them, instead of the PC coming ready to use.

In the business world (I am a business software consultant), we call the best of all the pieces and parts "best of breed". "One stop shop" is when everything comes from the same vendor (or partners that have produced products using the vendor's tools, thus making it seem like they are from the one vendor). Most companies shy away from "best of breed", because they don't want to deal with various vendors, interfaces and consultants during installation, and even more so once they are in production. In a "best of breed" situation, there is a lot of passing the buck. This costs time and money for the customer.

To the average consumer, "one stop shop" is less expensive and more efficient. Generally, we don't have the time or knowledge, which results in us being passed around from person to person (on the phone, after being put on hold) when we have a problem. Maybe I can dig through it, but my husband and my father certainly cannot. They are not in the tech industry at all! I buy my home personal computer with everything installed -- operating system and applications. When something goes wrong, I make ONE phone call. I don't have to make several calls (like I must do with the phone company, because data, voice, equipment, etc., is all handled by individual parties, and after an hour, you still don't have the problem solved).

I think Microsoft is an innovative company, and I think the tech companies who have sued are exhibiting nothing more than sour grapes. Let's face it, they lost the game. There are other business that effectively partnered with MS. In our culture, business is survival of the fittest, isn't it? Sales have always been aggressive in the places I've worked. If companies choose not to do business due to aggressive sales tactics, so be it. That is their choice. Those who can handle it, will and those who can't won't (in this case, they are suing which I guess is the American way, as jaded as it sounds).

Breaking up Microsoft will damage the home user's experience with the personal computer. It will increase the cost in dollars and time, and be inefficient.

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